

WARRIOR LEADER

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Operation Warrior Forge

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CADETS SET SIGHTS ON SUCCESS

INSIDE:

Taking Aim at BRM

Building Confidence

Staying Afloat

Responding to Injuries

A 6th Regiment cadet sets her sights downrange during basic rifle marksmanship training.

U.S. Army Photo by Al Zdarsky



'Back when I was a cadet and camp was hard ...'

By Col. Steven Corbett
Warrior Forge Commander

How many times has a cadet at Warrior Forge heard these words? Okay, I admit that I may have used phrase myself once or twice during my tenure in Cadet Command. Through a strange



Corbett

coincidence, my mother recently sent me a box of papers and letters from my youth. Among them, I found the very first letter that I wrote home from the 1979 ROTC Advanced Camp, here at Fort Lewis. I was a member of the 2nd Platoon, C

Company, housed in building 11D32, which is now in the 8th Regiment.

A couple of enlightening excerpts:

"Dear M&D --

Just thought I'd pen a quick note to let you know that I've arrived, and the fun is about to start. We got here in one piece ... we actually reported in a day early, and spent a couple of hours in the cadet club -- nice to have a couple of beers to get this started off right ... our two TACs seem pretty nice. Both are Vietnam Vets -- the captain is a grunt and still seems to miss 'Nam. Our NCO is a Special Forces master sergeant who has promised to take us fishing during our first weekend off.... We go to get our physicals tomorrow morning then have the rest of the day off to go to the PX on the cadet shuttle."

All right...maybe it wasn't quite as arduous as I remembered. What I do remember is LOTS of time spent on ranges, and very little time in the field. I also remember very clearly getting a positive and a negative spot report for the same

thing on the same day. I was the Company First Sergeant on the first day, and rapidly figured out that many of my fellow cadets were "Drill and Ceremonies Challenged." I moved the company around throughout the day (I think we went to CIF), by repositioning myself wherever the company needed to be and directing, "Fall out and fall in on me." (Seemed like a good idea at the time). My NCO thought it was a great plan (SF guys aren't famous for their D&C skills either), but the Captain seemed extremely agitated, for some reason.

I've spent some time over the past few days, rewriting the letter, as it would possibly look today:

"Dear M&D --

Just thought I'd IM you before they take away all of our electronic devices. We got here in one piece, and I studied my FM 7-8 on the plane. We reported a day early, and got in-processed, now we are responsible for moving our fellow cadets around, and getting the barracks set up. Our three TACs seem pretty sharp. The captain has done two tours in Iraq. He was a Transportation Company Commander and was in combat almost every day. Our lieutenant is a PT stud, and I'm terrified they'll put her in charge of remedial PT. Our NCO is a combat engineer who has done a tour in Afghanistan as well, and knows more about IEDs than any person on earth. We get our physicals tomorrow, then our APFT. I'm a little worried because I hear that the LDAC average is about 265, and I usually only score in the 250's. We'll take our land nav test that night, then go to the woods the day after that ..."

Our cadets are in a different ROTC, a different summer training program, and will serve a different American Army in a different world. For all of you cadets who hear "back when I was a cadet and camp was hard..." from some old colonel, smile, nod, say "Yes Sir." If your PTO lieutenant says them, listen a bit more closely, and know that your Warrior Forge experience is even tougher than theirs was.

By Command Sgt. Major Victor Mercado
Warrior Forge Command Sgt. Major

Since my last article two more regiments have activated, one more is about to activate and another is filling up quickly. The total numbers of cadet command and support cadres on the ground is about 3,000 strong and going up every week. As you can tell, Warrior Forge is almost fully alive. The amazing part of this major training event is the dedication and commitment of everyone involved.

The sad part of Warrior Forge for the boss and I is sending cadets home for Physical, APFT, or Land Navigation failures. Many of these cadets were not prepared with the basics to attack the challenges of these events. The only good thing about the cadets being dropped is that they will have a fresh opportunity to do it again next year.



Mercado

In just this last week the boss and I have been very busy certifying commitments. We want the best, safest, most realistic and most challenging training for all our cadets. Our goal is for the last cadet to get the same level of training as the first cadet. We have assembled the best corps of officers and NCOs to make Warrior Forge 2006 a memorable one. The commander and I are very proud of all the hard work being performed by our cadre and employees.

This year Warrior Forge is unique because we have taken the time of our busy schedule to dedicate four committee sites with the names of fallen officers. Their source of commissioning was ROTC. These memorial ceremonies put everything in perspective and highlights why we volunteer to serve in this great Army. Heroes like them give us the energy and motivation to continue the fight against terrorism. Please keep in your daily prayers all the fallen comrades, their families, and our deployed battle buddies.

I'm going to end for now with my favorite phrase, "Everything we do is training and training is everything we do." To be successful in your military career you must always plan your daily task as a training event (in Operation Order format) and always use Troop Leading Procedures (TLP). I guarantee that if you take this approach you will always keep your followers informed, and most importantly, save their lives.

Train hard but train safe. Safety first, safety always!



Col. Steven R. Corbett
Commander

Western Region, U.S Army Cadet Command

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Train on purpose! and safely ...

By Sgt. Major Marcus King
Commandant of Cadets Sgt. Major

It's my pleasure to have this opportunity to address all the cadets and Soldiers at Warrior Forge. I have the pleasure of serving as the Commandant of Cadets Sgt. Major this year. We currently have 11 regiments on the ground with over 3,000 cadets from some 272 schools and 3,500 cadre and support Soldiers. Only one regiment has yet to arrive and the graduations have begun.

I've had the honor of attending the dedication memorials, naming some of our training sites after fallen heroes: the First Aid Assault Course, named in honor of Capt. Sean Grimes, Medical Corps, a graduate from Michigan State University; the Field Leader's Reaction Course, named in honor of Capt. Kimberly Hampton, Aviation, from Presbyterian College; the Hand Grenade Assault Course, named in honor of Capt. Michael Tarlavsky, Infantry and Special Forces, a graduate of Rutgers University; and the ITT Assault Course, named in honor of 1st Lt. Nainoa Hoe, Infantry, graduate of University of Hawaii. Their stories tell us that the call to defend our nation isn't about your branch or if you're male or female. Any of us may get the call at any time, the question is: Will we be prepared?

I'd like to stress the importance of the training that you'll receive at Warrior Forge and to the cadre that will provide the training. Simply put, this will be the most important 32 days of training our cadets will receive and that the cadre will provide. The training that the cadets will receive isn't just to get you through Warrior Forge – when you deploy, you'll use it. I challenge both the cadets and the cadre to take the training seriously and learn as much as possible. Don't think of any of this training as unimportant. Every minute of your training is important, not just those events which are evaluated.

Safety must be a part of everything we do no matter how small or large the task. Along with operating safely, we have to display situational awareness and look after our battle buddy. We must stay focused on the task at hand and never look too far ahead. Accidents don't always happen in the field environment -- they happen in the garrison environment also. We each have a battle buddy and will have the opportunity to serve key leaders. We need to ensure that everyone is paying attention and looking after each other. Remember, Warrior Forge isn't just preparation, it's a picture of the real thing.



Photo: Al Zdarsky

Ann and Dale Hampton, parents of Capt. Kimberly Hampton, speak with Col. Steven Corbett (left), Warrior Forge Commander, and another officer during the dedication ceremony honoring their daughter. The Field Leader's Reaction Course was named in honor of Hampton June 16.

Cadet training venues named for fallen heroes

By Bob Rosenburgh
Warrior Forge Public Affairs

Cadet Command's annual Operation Warrior Forge added something new to several of their training sites this summer – the names of young officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Global War on Terror.

Four American heroes, all of whom had previously trained on these very sites as they earned their commissions, were memorialized in ceremonies that included members of their families, friends and dignitaries and a new generation of cadets set to fill the ranks as new officers themselves.

The Capt. Sean Grimes First Aid Assault Course was dedicated on June 13. June 16 saw a ceremony naming the Capt. Kimberly Hampton Field Leaders Reaction Course and on June 17, the Capt. Michael Tarlavsky Hand Grenade Assault Course was named and cadets began training. The 1st Lt. Nainoa Hoe Combat Assault Course memorialization was June 22.

"This has been in the works for some time," said Lt. Col. Dave Poulton, the Memorialization Project Officer and National Guard Advisor for Western Region, Cadet Command. "It's occupied a good deal of my time since then." Poulton said the project has given him an extra appreciation of the sacrifices made by the Soldiers manning freedom's frontiers.

"All of the families have been very appreciative," he noted, adding that their cooperation has been instrumental in making these memorializations a reality. "I really looked forward to meeting these folks that I'd been talking to on the phone for so long. They've been so gracious and helpful and, as I said, very appreciative of what we're doing for their sons and daughter."

Col. Steven Corbett, Warrior Forge Commander, officiated each ceremony and met with each visiting family.

"Each of these brave Soldiers was a person," Corbett said. "Each has his or her own story – along with unfinished dreams and endeavors which were cut short by dying in the service of our Nation. As cadets train at each of these sites, they will have the opportunity to learn the legacies of these great Americans."

At Warrior Forge 2006, more than 4,000 young Americans will face the challenges of the training sites named in the memorial ceremonies, taking another step toward commissioning as officers in the U.S. Army.

"I'm thankful that we have young Americans like Grimes, Hampton, Tarlavsky and Hoe, who are willing to serve, willing to lead, and willing to make the final sacrifice.



Taking aim, staying on target

Cadets learn basic



By 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder
Warrior Forge Public Affairs

One of the most important tasks for any cadet is being able to hit his target. Skill with a firearm is one of the most important factors in an Army ROTC cadet's training. It is a critical skill with which all Soldiers and leaders must be familiar.

With the war on terrorism staring them in the face, no time is more important than today to perfect one's marksmanship ability. The skills learned here at Warrior Forge may one day save these future leaders and their Soldiers.

"BRM training is a critical skill for a cadet," said Sgt. Chad Poesch, an ammunition NCO here to support Warrior Forge. "It develops well-rounded leaders and prepares a cadet to lead in combat."

While here at Warrior Forge cadets get the opportunity to hone in on their skills

and have a day to qualify their M-16A2 rifle on a live firing range.

Second Lt. Ryan Knapp, BRM Support Platoon Leader, said that along with the basic fundamentals of rifle handling, there is one important thing all cadets need to remember while on the range and that's "safety first."

"Cadets have to remember to keep weapons properly up and down range at all times," Knapp said, "and to take all commands from the tower. If they notice any safety violations they must make 'cease fire' calls."

In addition to safety, some other refresher classes are related to cadets – how to properly hold an M-16A2 rifle, and the care and use of live ammunition among them.

Each weapon must be zeroed to each individual cadet's preferences. After a cadet has practiced zeroing they will move to the Laser Marksmanship Training System range, where targets are located twenty-five meters away. The LMTS helps save ammo using fewer rounds, according to

rifle marksmanship



Photos: Al Zdarsky



LDAC officials, which is especially important with the need that exists for M-16 ammunition in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Samuel Ruth, a 3rd Regiment cadet from University of Tennessee in Martin, Tenn., said he appreciates the new kneeling position being taught this year at camp.

"It's easier to shoot and it feels more natural when standing in a hole," Ruth said. He added that he also appreciates the difficulty of learning to shoot accurately. "The most frustrating thing about BRM is zeroing, because the rounds don't go where you want them to, to begin with, and even after adjustments they still don't."



COMBAT LIFESAVING



Photo: 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder



Photo: Al Zdarsky



Photo: Lt. Col. Charlie McGibony

BRINGING SOLDIERS HOME SAFELY

By Sgt. Joseph Siemandel
Warrior Forge Public Affairs

For the second year now, first aid has made its way into the core training here at Warrior Forge, and it seems to be making an impact. Cadets that are going through the first aid class seem to be catching on quickly and are retaining the information that has been given to them and they are implementing it into exercises.

"These cadets are picking up the information and using it well," said Sgt. Ronald Dietz, a member of the 104th Reg. Army Reserve Unit supporting in Warrior Forge. "They have good attitudes and are eager to learn these techniques."

The first aid techniques these cadets learn will be employed in more detailed training during the Squad Situational Training Exercise.

First aid was not on the core training for Warrior Forge

until last year when it replaced Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defense Training. Cadets now get NBC training along with first aid. Cadets have to learn to don their gas mask, clear and seal it, and go through the infamous "gas chamber."

After a classroom training session and a series of hands-on situations, cadets are evaluated on what they've learned in an event called "the crucible." This evaluative phase of training is squad-based and puts cadets in a real-time scenario in which they find a wounded Soldier and must tend to his injuries and call for medical help. This gives the cadets a chance to use the nine-line medical evacuation strategy and give them a good idea of what it is like out on the battle field.

"It's nice having this training," says Michael Hooper, a 3rd Regiment cadet from the University of Maryland. "This is some of the most important training we could get."



Fort Lewis MI company among many training cadets at Warrior Forge

Photo: Jason Kaye

By Don Kramer

Special to the Warrior Leader

Well before the June 1 ceremony that stood up the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, its leaders were heavily engaged in preparations for the biggest Army reserve officer training requirement in the country — Operation Warrior Forge.

Brigade planners tasked the 45th Military Intelligence Company to be among the first 4th Bde. unit to conduct the annual Leader Development and Assessment Course, a graduation requirement for all college ROTC cadets.

The LDAC began June 12 with MI NCOs conducting training and evaluations at the rappel tower, the obstacle course and the Leadership Reaction Course on North Fort.

"A little over half of the cadets who get commissioned this year will have been trained in part by 45th MI Co.," said company commander, Capt. John Griswold.

The Army estimates the 2006 LDAC cadet count at nearly 4,500. The company began preparations in late April by sending key NCOs and platoon sergeants for training with the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. Those NCOs returned to 4th Bde. to provide Soldier skills training to the rest of their platoons. They joined the rest of the company in May to receive more intensive, skill-specific training.

Those preparations have resulted in effective training for ROTC cadets, despite a 45th MI Co. assigned NCO strength at half its authorization — a function of the unit's recent redesignation. "Not everyone shows up at the same time," said Griswold, "but I'm fortunate that the NCOs we have are very competent and professional. Out of necessity, we've had to rely on specialists and PFCs. It's different than working in a SCIF (Sensitive Compartmented Intelligence Facility) or sitting behind a desk combat typing. Most have responded and done extremely well. That's the key, the professionalism all the way around, including the E-3s and E-4s."

Jennifer DeMartino, a diminutive intel analyst from

Hampton, Ga., acted as demonstrator at the rappel tower, sounding off with "Right hand, brake hand" and without hesitation, and bounded three times to the bottom of the 37-foot tower. Her performance was impressive in light of her giving birth seven months before.

"I'd like to think my kid would be glad her mother was part of this training," DeMartino said. "It's fun to help train our future leaders." It was no accident that DeMartino showed cadets the way to the ground, Griswold said. "We figured if we let our smallest Soldier demonstrate, it might give the cadets confidence."

The company commander called the company approach to cadet training "relaxed but professional. It's not about making anybody feel stupid or calling anybody out."

Staff Sgt. W.C. Petty, an instructor in the rope corral who taught cadets how to make Swiss seats, illustrated the company's training value. Petty pointed out a cadet's dangerously loose chin strap on his Kevlar helmet, but used the correction to make a teaching point as he adjusted the cadet's equipment.

"Remember this in the future when you train Soldiers," Petty said. "Anybody can make a mistake. Nobody's perfect."

The cadre of officers and senior NCOs from 8th Brigade, 104th Division ROTC, appreciated the professionalism of 4th Bde. leaders.

Master Sgt. Alex Taylor from Redstone Arsenal, Ala., an old hand at annual LDAC training, was enthusiastic about the support from 45th MI Co. "These guys are awesome," Taylor said Monday during training. "They're great people with just super attention to detail. Highly motivated, they take control, they're very mature. Very good people."

The MI company's ROTC training cycle will end July 5, after which Griswold and his leaders begin preparations for deployment next year. Fourth Bde. is scheduled for an Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation in May 2007.

Don Kramer writes for the Northwest Guardian, Fort Lewis' post newspaper.

CSA to House: Readiness must be top priority

By Steven Donald Smith

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — To successfully prosecute the war against terrorism, the U.S. military needs additional funds to maintain its equipment, the Army chief of staff told Congress yesterday.

"To prevail in the long struggle we are now engaged, we must maintain our readiness by resetting those who have deployed through a disciplined, orderly reconstitution of combat power," Army Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker said before the House Armed Services Committee. "Our soldiers' effectiveness depends upon a national commitment to recruit, train, equip and support them properly."

Equipment "reset" actions include repair and replacement of worn hardware. "In simplest terms, our reset program is designed to reverse the effects of combat stress on equipment," Schoomaker said.

The high demand of fighting the war on terror has put a major strain on Army equipment, Schoomaker said, and he pointed to the harsh operating environments in Iraq and Afghanistan as taking a heavy toll on equipment.

In Iraq, crews are driving tanks more than 4,000 miles per year, five times more than the expected annual usage of 800 miles, he said.

Army helicopters are experiencing usage rates about three times higher than the programmed rate, and trucks are operating five to six times their programmed rate, he said.

"This extreme wear is further exacerbated by the addition of heavy armor kits and other force protection initiatives," he said. "The compounding effect of increasing tempo and severe operating conditions in combat is decreasing the life of our equipment."

2nd Louie

By Bob Rosenburgh





Photo: Lt. Col. Charlie McGibony

Cadets gain confidence, conquer fears

By Sgt. Joseph Siemandel

Warrior Forge Public Affairs

Cadets at Warrior Forge have one common goal, and that is to get their gold bar and become a lieutenant in the United States Army. But what if you had a forty foot wall blocking that obstacle, and you knew you had to conquer that wall? It would be tough, but imagine if you were also scared of heights and didn't think you could do it?

"This course is supposed to give cadets the confidence to overcome their fears and also work together as a team and trust on another," said Pfc. John Wahl, a member of the 45th Military Intelligence Unit, supporting Warrior Forge. The 45th Military Intelligence unit is helping out this summer with the confidence course.

"It feels good to be out here to help train these future leaders," Wahl said. "One of these cadets out here could be a future platoon leader that I will serve with and I want them to have the best training possible."

The day at the confidence course begins with a road march to the site. After the brief, the cadets are separated and started out on easy events such as the log roll, and the balance beam. But once the cadre feels they are ready they get put to the test against an 18-event course that tests their endurance along with their will power to succeed.

"These cadets have to know that their battle buddies will not let them down and that they will be able to do the required tasks," Wahl added.

John Brown, a 3rd Regiment cadet from Creighton University, says that the obstacle course is a place to build intensity for and confidence for later training. "You find out what you are really made of and then you build on top of that." Brown, a former non-commissioned officer, describes the training as more upbeat and more focused. "You are being evaluated and you need to have your 'A' game the whole time."

Even though the confidence course sounds like a lot of work, it is also a favorite of many cadets here at Warrior Forge. It gives the cadets something fun to do while they also learn useful skills for tomorrow.



Photo: 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder



Photo: 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder



Photo: 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder



Water hazards tamed at CWST

By 2nd Lt. Joy Crowder

Warrior Forge Public Affairs

Minimizing real-world hazards is a major goal of any military training environment. The Combat Water Safety Test at Warrior Forge gives cadets the experience they need to safely face water hazards in the field – hazards that have killed at least 10 Soldiers since January.

Here at Warrior Forge the cadets go through many challenging events and one of those events is CWST or best known as Combat Water Safety Test.

CWST consists of three events that test each individual mentally and physically: a 15-meter swim with combat equipment, to include weapon; a 3-meter blindfolded drop with weapon; and a submerged combat equipment removal in which all combat equipment must be removed before the cadet resurfaces.

Just as all Soldiers must train to be safe in the water, all cadets must complete the Combat Water Survival Test as part of their training, said Capt. Timothy Cross, a 4th Regiment Platoon TAC.

“Water safety is an Army requirement and good leadership that will be carried on to troops learned now so they know it for a later time,” Cross said.

The CWST is used to develop swimming ability, physical fitness and confidence in cadets, and to demonstrate skills that are used to help rescue self, victims or distressed swimmers.

The cadets also learn to use their uniforms as a flotation device. The cadets learned that when needed their uniforms can become more than just clothing – they can become a useful tool. When their uniforms are filled with air, cadets are taught that they can tie the legs of their pants closed, which then become a floating water device to help one stay afloat.

Michael Parrish, a 4th Regiment cadet from James Madison University, was glad to have gone through the Combat Water Safety class offered at his school which prepared him to successfully execute the event here at Warrior Forge.

“CWST is an absolutely important skill that cadets should know,” Parrish said, “and plus it’s fun.”

Photo: Lt. Col. Charlie McGibony

